

REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges the indication that claims 15, 19, 22, and 23 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 15, 19, 22, and 23 are pending. The Abstract has been amended. Claims 4, 6, 8-9, 18, 20-21, and 24 have been canceled. Claims 15, 19, 22, and 23 have been amended. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Figs. 1A, 2-5, 6A, 6B, and 8-9 stand objected to for various reasons. According to the Office Action, in "Figures 1A and 2[,] the line from 23 should be dashed to denote underlying structure...[t]his also applies to the line from 24 and the members 24 in Figure 1A-2. In Figures 2, 3, and 5, the lines from 24 and 5 should be dashed to denote underlying structure. In Figure 4, the same lines extend to two different denotations, e.g. 22a and (a), which should be avoided. Differently configured structure have been given the same designation, e.g. 28 in Figures 1C and 5. Where in Figure 4 are elements 26 and 28, see descriptions of Figures 3 and 4? In Figures 6A-6B and 8A-9, the underlying elastic members should also be shown by dashed line elements."

With respect to the objection to the drawings, the following is noted. The Examiner is requiring an amendment of Figs. 1A and 2 such that the dashed line 23 shown in Fig. 1B is included in the figure. With respect to this requirement, Applicants respectfully assert that the dashed lines are not required in Fig. 1A, since this is a solid object figure, and the inclusion therein of the dashed lines would create a drawing that is unclear. The same applies to line 24 and the members 24 in Fig. 1A-2. In addition, Applicants respectfully assert that the drawings as shown, with respect to the elastic member 24, clearly indicate that the elastic member is stretchable.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings, based on these grounds are respectfully requested.

Regarding Fig. 4 and the use of 22a and (a) to designate the openings 22a or the liquid-passing areas (a), Applicants respectfully assert that these areas are one in the same, and the reference numerals indicate this fact. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is drawn to page 13, lines 4-10 of the specification. As set forth therein, "the absorbent core 23 of the urine-absorbing pad 20 absorbs a large portion of urine but permits the rest of it to pass through the openings 22a, 22a, (liquid-passing areas (a), (a)) in the backing layer 22 and to be absorbed by the absorbent body for the disposal diaper 1. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings, based on these grounds, are respectfully requested.

With respect to the objection to Fig. 4 as failing to show elements 26 and 28, as described in the descriptions of Fig. 3 and 4, Applicants respectfully assert that the inclusion of reference 28 is inappropriate in each of these figures. Furthermore, the specification does not describe reference 26 and 28 in these views. In this regard, Applicants wish to invite the Examiner to review the specification with respect to the description of Fig. 3 and Fig. 4, set forth on pages 11 thru 14 of the specification to validate this. Based on the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is requiring an amendment of Figs. 2, 3, and 5 to show the lines 24 and 25 in a dashed configuration. Here, Applicants respectfully assert that the lines shown illustrate that the article contains material that is gathered (i.e., bunched up) when released such that the elastic retracts. Regarding Fig. 6A-6B and 8A-9, Applicants respectfully assert that, in this case, the underlying elastic members should not be shown by dashed line elements. Here, the elastic

members are shown in a gathered state. Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert, that unlike in Fig. 3, where the absorbent article is entirely stretched out, and the elastic members are ungathered, the elastic members shown in Fig. 6A and 6B are gathered. Therefore, it is inappropriate to show the elastic member in a dashed notation. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully assert that reconsideration and withdrawal of the all objections to the drawings are in order, and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

The Abstract of the disclosure has been objected to based on certain grammatical inconsistencies. As a result, Applicants have amended the Abstract such that it is now grammatically correct. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are requested.

Claims 19 and 22 stand rejected as failing to invoke 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. In view of this objection, Applicant has amended the claim to remove the “means” language set forth in each of the claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

Claims 15, 19, and 22-23 stand objected to based on certain informalities. In response to the Examiner’s objections, Applicants have amended the claims in a manner which is believed to address each objection. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections are respectfully requested.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should be in condition for allowance. Early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. However, if there are any questions regarding this Response, or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this would expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

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Respectfully submitted,

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